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MUSICAL EDUCATION  
BY  
ELEANOR MARGARET GEARY









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# MUSICAL EDUCATION ;

WITH

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THE ART OF

# PIANO-FORTE PLAYING

BY

ELEANOR MARGARET GEARY,

(PROFESSOR OF MUSIC,)

No. 61, ST. JAMES'S STREET.

"Music is the only symbol—the only language, that can fraternize all men at one and the same instant."

"The science of method may be considered the key of all sciences."

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## P R E F A C E .

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IN preparing the following pages for general perusal, the aim of the writer has been to lessen that intense application, and superfluous waste of time, so frequently sacrificed at the shrine of musical practice, and to exemplify the influence of fundamental principles as the talisman of future excellence.

61, St. James's Street, :

Dec. 1st, 1841.





# MUSICAL EDUCATION.

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## FIRST PART.

THE general diffusion of the science of sweet sounds imposes upon the highly educated of the present generation an extension of time for its study, adequate to the degree of musical proficiency demanded in cultivated society.

That *quantity*, however, is to be surpassed by *quality*, has travelled into a proverb, and should be a maxim of constant recurrence to those who are entrusted with the charge of youth, during the fleeting years of early education.

The period of youth is time twice blessed—time that no after period can retrace, and is, consequently, time in which mental pursuits of the highest order should not be made subservient to the study of the *mechanical* branch of an art; for such, to a certain extent, I deem the brilliant execution of any instrument to be—though the mind, the grand focus, must *perfect* it.

Impressed with this conviction, the following remarks are offered, embodying a series of practice, which governed by a right and rational principle, will, without any sacrifice of time, safely conduct to the acmé of piano-forte playing.

The ideas suggested are a concentration of those arising from my daily experience as a teacher and player of the instrument ; and though the success I am proud to lay claim to, in the former branch of my profession, may be ascribed to the natural result of clever and creditable pupils—the more hazardous ordeal of a public player, which placed me in arraignment before the whole tribunal of metropolitan critics, having been no less fortunate—enables me to present, as my passport of identity, a selection of their kind and liberal eulogies. And fearful lest these addenda of my own successes may be construed into an appearance of egotism, I must explain the principle which influences their insertion to be that expressed by Addison, when he says, “Those who suggest improvements, in the works of others, should first distinguish themselves by their own performances.” Crowned, then, with the diploma of practical proficiency, I shall venture to offer the outline

of a system, pursued with such happy results to myself, and with no less advantage to those, whose musical studies are under my control.

The first effort in the *economy of time* should be to secure to the student *a good quality of tone*, viz.: that every note be round, even, and finished. To acquire this desideratum, every finger must be equally vigorous; the hand must possess a perfect balance and a just altitude over the keys; the arm must be divested of every connecting movement; the wrist must act as a mere pivot, while the whole *machinery* must proceed from the fingers. These must not be too much curved, or the tone becomes weak—nor too straight, or the tone will be hard, and the action of the fingers impeded; their just medium is to press upon the interior extremity with no other force than that arising from their suspensory position, unaided by the ungraceful efforts of wrists, arms, and shoulders. The two weakest fingers are generally the first and third. The assistance of the Dactylion will contribute to dispel that inequality; it is an instrument, also, of great utility in rendering the third and fourth fingers independent of each other; for these two sympathetic neighbours will usually be found clinging together, unless artificial

means be resorted to for their alienation. The left hand requires a separate study of similar perseverance, as to the flexible assistance of this (naturally the weaker hand) modern music owes so much of its brilliancy.

The next step to be obtained, and which sometimes demands all the energy of the teacher, is a perfect facility of counting time, *aloud*, uninterruptedly, and with the regularity of a metronome; for as long as the pupil is irregular, or subject to indolent pauses in this essential, so long will her playing evidence the same irregularity, while the difficulty of reading new music, which practice has not taught her to divide into points and phrases, will ever remain unconquerable.

The two grand points, then, to which future excellence in piano-forte playing owes its original debt, are these — *Time and Tone*. For as in structures of every kind the lower parts should have the greatest firmness, so should the ground and principles of a science be correctly and truly ascertained, or all the exertions of subsequent years will be employed in destroying bad habits, which ought *never* to have been acquired.

And as the skilful architect, late though his assistance may be sought, commences with a careful scrutiny and correction of the errors of his less judicious predecessor—so does the skilful teacher first seek to counteract bad habits and natural weaknesses, instead of leaving stiff arms, fallen wrists, contracted positions, and tottering fingers, to follow as they best can in the vain pursuit of a brilliant execution.

Nothing can be more absurd, or less conducive to a pupil's ultimate advancement, than to regard "difficult music" and "considerable progress" as synonymous progressions; on the part of a teacher, it is an unconscientious mode of proceeding—substituting show for reality. Cramped and ungraceful positions, crowds of false harmonies, and a total absence of taste and expression pervade such performances.

These are the cases in which suffering visitors have to pay a full penalty of patience in enduring, for the best third part of an hour, a monotonous and over-grown scramble on the piano-forte, probably some chef d'œuvre, but which should have known long estrangement from the fingers of the young essayist.



While difficulty is apparent, taste remains in abeyance ; exercises should, therefore, be the reserved corps, for all *tours de force*, prior to their exhibition in the *morceau de salon*.

A piece destined to *please*, should never exceed seven or ten minutes ; it is rarely done by the finest masters, unless it be in concertos, which, with the relief of a full orchestra, are offered exclusively to a musical audience.

There is another important auxiliary to the young aspirant for future practical proficiency, and which, though extraneous to mechanical exercise, transfers thither so much mental activity, that it should grow with the growth of even the little beginner.

This is the study of harmony and composition, with its old ally, thorough bass—one of the unexplored mysteries of by-gone female education, then abstruse beyond mathematics or the dead languages. But the barrier which imprisoned this and every other science of yore, having long been thrown aside, it now floats within the grasp of the most youthful intellect. And to none are we more indebted for this difficulty made easy, than to those clever musicians, Messrs. Burrowes and Hamilton, whose useful works on the subject form, in themselves, a comprehensive theory. Some persons imagine

that, to teach a pupil the art of composition, she must necessarily become a composer, or that the study is essential only to those who are so. This is an error of judgment; for every thing must be best acquired with understanding for its basis.

When a child is instructed in all the grammatical perplexities of her vernacular language, it is not that she may become a novelist or a poet—but that she may better appreciate, and deliver with increased feeling, the writings of others. The same with composition in music. Words are here expressed by signs indicative of sounds, conveying equal meaning with those of any spoken tongue, and arranged with like grammatical precision.

The language of harmonious, like that of oral sounds, must, therefore, be conveyed with additional feeling, pathos, and sentiment, when its idiom and the rules which guide the formation of each sentence are understood.

A quarter of an hour's daily exercise, with a music slate, will be sufficient for this study, which, next in kin to that of ciphering, rather repulses than invites, at its first introduction; but by calling into action the powers of calculation, or, in other words, exerting a necessity of *thinking*, it equally tends to the general enlargement of the reasoning faculties.

Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, was accustomed to say, that he who was ignorant of the arithmetical art, was but *half a man*; with equal truth it may be said, that they who are ignorant of the art of composition, are but half musicians.

Expression in music, though in its essence an inherent quality, is susceptible of improvement, by the artificial resources of science. It is in simple melodies—the music of natural appeal—and which alone the undisciplined ear appreciates, that expression must be the unchecked impulse of native feeling; but it is in elaborate and complicated harmonies—where melody would disappear without the aid of science—that it lends its sovereign assistance, and transforms a chaos of rolling sounds into a regular and measured melody. The music of Thalberg is, in itself, an illustration. From the moment the simple melody enters the composition, the final chord is alone the signal for its departure.

Sometimes it will be the singing boundary of a chromatic, sometimes the intermediate distinction of an arpeggio passage; now it may be traced through a deluge of sparkling octaves, then in the rich cantabile of a majestic bass will it colour with unfading melody a delicious peal of right-hand variations.

The cultivated perception readily follows these transitions, and tints their outline with a shade more or less subdued, according to the indications of the author.

There are two appendages to modern piano-fortes, by the skilful management of which, the greatest effect is to be produced,—these are the loud and soft pedals; but their proper changes are of such importance, that they are better wholly disused than misemployed. As, however, the power of sustaining intense vibrations on the piano-forte is so limited, the open pedal is a powerful agent in relieving its otherwise monotonous characteristic, and should be understood as soon as the nature of chords in their successions of harmony have been explained. One lesson will suffice to become acquainted with the common chords of all the keys, and with this instruction should be united the art of pedalling. The argument often adduced against the use of the pedals is, that they produce confused and incorrect playing, which the open vibration conceals; want of practice, and a correct method of employing them, certainly justify these complaints; but the pupil who desires an expressive style and a positive comprehension of the capabilities of the

instrument, should be instructed in this art from her second year of tuition.

The use of them should be very sparingly employed in rapid passages, and in all chromatic and close changes of harmony they are better dispensed with ; their chief beauty is in arpeggio passages, and in those requiring continuity of sound. In cadences of extreme delicacy and refinement of style, the *una corda*, or soft pedal, used in conjunction with the open pedal, creates an effect that is singularly beautiful.

Unless extraordinary talent be prematurely developed, eight years of age is sufficiently early for any child to be puzzled with the elementary mysteries of music, though for one year prior to such commencement she should have her fingers trained for half an hour daily in the exercises of five notes compass, so that the position of the hand and an even touch (the actual secret of all good playing) may be accurately obtained, before the eye and the mind of the child be made to wander over the region of lines and spaces. From eight to ten, a complete elementary course should be pursued ; those of Burrowes, Cramer, Kalkbrenner, and Moscheles, are alike excel-

lent, with the first volume of Hummel, and during this interval one hour's daily practice will be required.

At ten, she may enter regular studies, commencing with those of Bertini, continuing through Cramer, Kalkbrenner, Potter, Moscheles, and Hummel, which will be found replete with melody, combined with every variety of classical and brilliant style that the most ambitious amateur would strive to attain; for be it understood, these hints are addressed to the amateur, and not to the professional student. These studies, united with well-chosen pieces, will occupy the intervening years from ten to sixteen, allowing always for the casual interruptions of recreative summer months, &c. To do justice alike to teacher and pupil, two hours daily practice should be sedulously adhered to, from the eleventh year up to the boundary of discontinuing lessons; less than that is insufficient,—more than that is time unjustly wrung from literary study. Nor should the whole division of time be devoted to one sitting, for the mind of youth requires a change in its bent every succeeding hour; even in mature years the intellect tires, if pursuing for many consecutive hours the same occupation.



A theologian being once engaged in a work requiring the most profound and extensive erudition, the great recreation of the learned father was, at the end of every two hours, to *twirl his chair for five minutes*.

Seneca also remarks,—“A continuity of labour deadens the soul, and the mind must unbend itself by certain amusements.”

Occasionally playing in the drawing room, before the elder and stranger members of the family, may almost be deemed indispensable for the subsequent perfection of the pianiste, the want of such practice causing not only an unenergetic performance, but also one rendered by timidity incorrect and uncertain.

As intellectual attainments in youth derive their chief impetus from the superior endowments of their elder associates, so should the atmosphere of the home circle be fragrant with melody. Intuition, then, sweetens a path, which to the first musical disciple of a family is often strewed with discouraging difficulties.

Desultory practice should never be indulged in; the

hours allotted to study should be so employed through the best medium, *regularity*, or, like desultory reading, the mind wanders through much, without retaining the connecting link of any. I should however fear for that student as unendowed, who, at the termination of her regular studies, did not occasionally go of her own accord and seek to play something untaught, the dictate of her own pure taste; for those who do not feel the instrument they study a magnet of attraction, when other occupations are laid aside, will never make it a source of pleasure to themselves or others. If music be not indigenous, the fostering hand of science works over a sterile ground; the fingers may, indeed, be taught their impress, but let feeling, the soil of taste and genius, be wanting, and it is like the idiot stare of a mindless countenance,—the eye is opened and it gazes, but, alas! where is the lustre of expression?

Music hath her favourites, and lends her descent as tenaciously as other heir-looms,—like true nobility it resideth in the soul; and, as I shall endeavour to prove in my work on Heraldry, the stamp of pristine nobility rarely invested the forms or minds of those on whom Nature herself had not set her signet, so is there em-

bosomed in the soul of music all that is amiable, all that is refined in human feeling, and as the hereditary liquid flows, it reproduces in its course the divinest attributes of sensibility.

“ The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils ;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus ;  
Let no such man be trusted.”

SHAKESPEARE.

The only historical record of music placed in a revolting form, is that of Nero, who is represented seated on the summit of a tower playing his harp when Rome was burning ; but Nero was one of the Roman monsters, and perverted the most sacred objects to the basest of purposes.

The poet tells us that Orpheus charmed rocks, woods, and fountains with his lute,—symbolical of the power music possesses over mankind generally, the citizen, the peasant, and the mariner.

The influence of *national music* over the most uncultivated hearts, has been often quoted ; and uncongenial

as is the sound to the refined ears of Southern climes, the wonders wrought by the bagpipe of Caledonia, have sometimes rivalled mythic legends.

The Ranz des Vaches, too, has so powerful an influence over the Swiss, and kindles in them such a yearning for their native country, that in the Swiss regiments employed in the French service, it was forbidden to be played under pain of death.

Of all the fine arts, though, perhaps, the musical performer occupies the briefest space in the annals of fame—for the power of the wand dies with the magician—the empire of its transient reign is boundless;—every passion in human nature is under its sway;—every sentiment of love, hatred, joy, or grief, are alike attracted by its spell. At the impulse of the musician the drooping countenance re-animates and smiles in pleasurable participation. Invert the strain; the mind is saddened—it knows not why—but the chords of sensibility respond with the melancholy outpourings of the artist, and tears of intellectual refinement pay their delicious homage.

The music of England is rich in historical reminiscence,

and its most accomplished rulers have been votaries to the Euterpean muse.

Our first monarch, whom memory honors with the epithet Great, was so perfect a bard, that disguised as a minstrel, he braved an entrance into the hostile camp. His true assumption of the character awakened no suspicion, and the monarch owed to the *minstrel*, subsequent victory and expulsion of the Danes.

The same page that records the pleasing trait of the wandering Troubadour, who sought the castle which imprisoned brave Cœur de Lion, tells also of the warrior monarch's *skill*—to make his harp echo the melodious greeting. But music chronicles a mournful tale in the unblest career of the beauteous Queen of Scots, when it points to the name of David Rizzio ! !

In the country where ancient philosophy divided itself into schools and sects, and where wisdom was almost wafted with the wind, musical and mental education were so entwined, that the communion of each seemed essential for the existence of either.

Nor does it occupy a less important position in the moral training of our own enlightened isle, where music is the cherished pursuit of every daughter of noble or

gentle bearing—where the grand universities of aristocratic sway award titles and distinctions to its professors, and where institutions, endowed by regal and princely munificence, shield from the dread of poverty the musician and those who are his. And while England's banner floats with the symbol of a country, hallowed by the recollection of the minstrel race, and—glittering with the golden strings of Erin's harp—proclaims our union with the land of pathetic melody, may her own majestic anthems ever record the heart-felt inspiration of *her national music*, in the mighty unison of myriads of loyal and patriotic voices poured forth in homage to Britannia's Sovereign Queen.



## SECOND PART.

As fashion, with all her absurdities, seldom imposes authority over the educational world, unattended by some advantages, I shall endeavour to trace the different benefits that are capable of resulting from the prevalent study of music, in connexion with an intellectual routine.

Without questioning the doctrine of Pythagoras, when he asserted, that music was constantly issuing from the heavenly bodies, but that its continuity prevented our hearing it—the beautiful moral of an English poet that “all nature is harmony,” must present its own truth to the ear of susceptibility.

Whether we listen to the fairy hum of the winged insect tribe, or to the perfect cadence of the gifted singing bird, are our ears soothed by the silvery trickling of a wandering rivulet, or startled at the rushing waves of the rising tide!—do we listen to the voices of ethereal

converse, as the zephyrs whisper their dulcet strains through the rich foliage of a happy season ! or do we shudder at the searching autumnal blast, when it traverses and scatters those yellow emblems of man's mortality !—mental ascendance is the same ; and in proportion as we are enabled to appreciate this ever revolving harmony of nature, our contemplation is more and more awakened to the wise sublimity of an *All Creative Power*.

Music, as an accomplishment, holds imperial rank ; and, without ascribing to it the miraculous powers of the ancients, who believed its influence could dispel derangements of intellect, fevers, plagues, &c. &c., its assistance in removing ungente behaviour, and discordant tempers may be successfully marked. A young lady, whose temper was more at fault than her disposition, was fond of indulging in these occasional ebullitions of unamiability, and having passed the rubicon of infantine reproof, the following means was adopted for her correction :—

At the full height of this temporary insanity, her governess, apparently unconscious of her humour, would request the favor of her playing “*Tutto è sciolto*,” or some similarly pathetic composition, and by the time this had been once or twice repeated, serenity again shone on

her countenance. Aware of this successful mode of correction, she frequently confesses that, when she finds perversity has taken possession of her, although her right reason clamours through the voice of conscience, its appeal is less powerful than the soothing tones of her piano-forte, to which, as Milton expresses it, she has recourse "*to put her soul in tune.*" We read in scripture that David employed his harp to remove the mental derangement of Saul. May we not sometimes trace a most perfect resemblance between aberration of intellect and aberration of temper?

Sir Walter Scott has designated as "an excellent thing in woman," the possession of a soft sweet voice, and as this requires for its perfection a well modulated intonation, music may be considered the passport to expressive eloquence. The ear, too, that is accustomed to receive the impressions of sounds, acquires with astonishing facility the idiom and accent of a foreign language; and, need it be said, that early education must have been lamentably neglected, when an accomplished musician is disgraced by orthographical deficiency.

The dignified deportment—the graceful bearing and the finished step, whether in dancing or walking—are

alike component attributes to the musical art, whilst the refinement of the mind, and the boundless gratifications afforded by the accomplishment itself, render it worthy the high and distinguished position society now awards to its members.

The following rule for the regulation of practice hours, though of course subject to the fate of its whole race, viz. to be fraught with exceptions, which the position of circumstances can alone determine, will nevertheless offer a table, upon the model of which others may be arranged; its grand purport is to let the student know *when* her practice has sufficed, and in *what* it is to consist; to fill up the vacuum of uncertainty left by the teacher, who advises as much practice as possible, or who only grants a limitation, provided she practise properly.

No specified rule being given, however, in either case, the task is performed with the natural reluctance attending an endless undertaking. And as a traveller pursues his journey with increased energy when his destined goal is in view, so does a youthful mind work with double animation, when it anticipates a landmark to its exertions.

**MODEL OF A SCALE OF PRACTICE,**  
 a regular adherence to which, will, without fatigue and  
 without injustice to other studies, constitute a  
**BRILLIANT PIANISTE.**

---

**AT THE AGE OF SEVEN,**

Exercises of five notes to be practised half an hour daily.

**AT THE AGE OF EIGHT,**

Kalkbrenner's Method to be studied one hour daily, in two  
 divisions of half an hour each.

**AT THE AGE OF NINE,**

Kalkbrenner's Method, including his	}	three quarters of an hour.
Classification of Scales.....		
Cramer's, Burrowes', or Moscheles'	}	three quarters of an hour.
Lessons .....		

**AT THE AGE OF TEN,**

Hummel's 1st volume .....	a quarter of an hour.
Scales.....	a quarter of an hour.
Bertini's Studies .....	half an hour.
Piece for Practice .....	half an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF ELEVEN,

Finger Exercises and Scales ..... half an hour.  
 Cramer's Studies ..... one hour.  
 Piece for Practice..... half an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF TWELVE,

Finger Exercises of sustained Notes, } half an hour.  
 Double Notes, and Shakes ..... }  
 Scales ..... a quarter of an hour.  
 Moscheles' Studies ..... half an hour.  
 Piece for Practice..... three quarters of an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN,

Finger Exercises, various ..... half an hour.  
 Scales..... a quarter of an hour.  
 Potter's Preludes, and 1st volume of } three quarters of an hour.  
 Studies ..... }  
 Piece for Practice..... half an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN,

Finger Exercises and Scales ..... half an hour.  
 Kalkbrenner's or Hummel's Studies .. three quarters of an hour.  
 Piece for Practice....., .. three quarters of an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN,

Finger Exercises and Scales ..... half an hour.  
 Cramer's or Potter's 2nd volume .... three quarters of an hour.  
 Piece for Practice,..... three quarters of an hour.

## AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN,

Finger Exercises and Scales ..... half an hour.  
 Moscheles' Characteristic Studies .... three quarters of an hour.  
 Piece for Practice..... three quarters of an hour.



The array of studies here presented may seem an alarming perspective, until reference be made to any collection of music, resulting from a six years' course of instruction, and the comparison will then leave a considerable balance in my favour, for pleasing pieces to be introduced *ad libitum*. And as the first idea of all method consists in a progressive transition from one step to another, the pursuance of a classified series of such progressions will, it is presumed, tend to a satisfactory termination of those years of study, which are too frequently passed away in the mere frivolity of playing pretty and popular pieces.

Twice a week, say Mondays and Thursdays, an hour may be taken for the repetition of pieces already learnt, and this deduction from the regular practice, will be counterbalanced by the two hours' lesson received during the week. In particularizing the above-named authors, it is not my intention to imply that theirs are the sole studies capable of perfecting a student, there are many others equally talented. Czerny, Herz, Litolf, Thalberg Döhler, Chopin, Rosenhain, &c., have all contributed exquisite melodies and choice mechanical passages to

this species of composition ; but I consider the former named better calculated for a regular and progressive theory, and the last named more likely to be taken up at the option of the player, after the term of initiatory practice has been gone through. For no student of music, even the most diligent, need ever fear to echo the words of the Macedonian hero, who, at every fresh accession to his father's territories, renewed his apprehensions that he should have nothing left him to conquer.

It may not be irrelevant here to make mention of a consecutive series of exercises, of great practical utility to all students, but which are of the most valuable assistance to those semi-adult beginners, who, having commenced the study too late (or perhaps not wishing) to cultivate all the mechanical minutiae of the science, are anxious to acquire in the least possible time a flexible, brilliant, and expressive finger. The exercises I allude to are those of Czerny, entitled, exercises on scales, on double notes, on the shake, and on expression, *sur la vitesse, et sur les ornemens*. Being formed upon the simplest harmony, the want of deep theoretical know-

ledge offers no impediment to their being quickly read, and easily producing facility of execution.

In my scale of practice, it will be seen that I attach much importance to the finger exercises, an importance I am justified to express, when I state that they are adopted by nearly every continental pianist, even in the zenith of his popularity, for the enforcement and preservation of a just equilibrium of finger.

Uninfluenced by the arm or wrist, the muscular power of the finger alone is brought into action, a daily augmentation of strength is acquired, and a true position of the hand secured, before it traverses the octave range of the instrument. It is truly lamentable to see some young people struggling to get through a piece; not only are the bones of their poor little wrists, arms, and shoulders aching from the false effort, while their distended veins testify the exertion, but the very sinews of their neck are writhed and stiffened into actual pain.

To a teacher's observation, such instances are not unfrequent, and though the difficulty of counteracting pre-acquired distortions is one of the most unenviable duties of the profession, experience enables me to affirm,

that the false habits of years *may* be surmounted by the persevering application of the finger exercises.

In a word, their utility to the pianiste corresponds with the battements of the dancer, the solfeggio of the singer, or the verbs of the linguist; they *can* be dispensed with, but common reason will dictate the value of their adoption.

The importance of the scales is too generally admitted to require further comment. The best method of going through them is as follows :—

First, with each hand separately, and struck with a light staccato touch, until every note ring with the same consistency; then let each hand assume its part in the same piano staccato tone, until the vibration produced by right and left hand be simultaneous; the crescendo and diminuendo may then be introduced, and the occasional exchange of the staccato for the legato touch, will give considerable colouring to this usually uninteresting episode. When all these shades and simultaneous rush of notes become habitual to the student, she may make a fresh exercise, by going through each scale, major and minor, as follows :—

First, ascend and descend one octave, commencing at

the two lowest ; then two, then three, then four, and so on, according to the extent of the piano-forte, concluding by a gradual return to one octave.

This is an excellent way to prepare the hand for the neat execution of running passages, in whatever part of the instrument they may occur. The scales in thirds, sixths, and tenths, major and minor, should be played with the tone constantly varied, sometimes modulating the touch to pianissimo, at others fortissimo, whilst the blending of the two, by a gradual crescendo, forms the most beautiful of the scale variations.

In practising the studios and pieces, the first thing to be ascertained from the teacher is, the correct fingering ; that being indicated, a select portion will be taken for the week's study ; but as in every piece and in every studio there are some passages of much greater difficulty than others, these divisions should be first selected for left hand, right hand, inverted, extended, and every form of persevering practice ; for unless their difficulty be subdued and brought, by increased practice, to a level with the rest of the piece, one of two contingencies must occur—either that the composition will always be unevenly played, or that it will take an amazing increase of time to continue practising a whole, when a part only

is in error. When a piece is once thus shorn of its difficulties, the *meaning* of the author must be studiously enquired into, for every composition has its own peculiar character; and to a practised reader every favorite passage of the author is discernible.

I trust it will be apparent, from the foregoing remarks, that the view I take of music, as an educational branch, is, that in occupying a secondary position among the great purposes of education, its study should be so fundamentally and progressively regulated by a daily perusal of standard authors, that at the expiration of those years commonly set apart for close application, the student should no longer require assistance in decyphering a new piece of music, any more than she would in rendering a French translation. To heighten and to retain a good style, or to follow the revolutions of a Thalberg or a Liszt, subsequent lessons will occasionally be required, but that which is termed the drudgery of the art should now cease, and the consequent effects of a rational system be displayed in the unlaborious mastery of all it undertakes.

In a very interesting detail of the abuse of female

education, owing for its author (I think) no less a writer than Dr. James Johnson, young ladies employed in the sedentary occupation of striving, for many hours together, to acquire elaborate execution on the piano-forte, are compared to the poor factory girls, whose necessitous imprisonment is scarcely more to be deplored. The complete exhaustion, or, perhaps, absorption, of the mental faculties and the feeble constitution, engendered by such habits, would indeed render fine piano-forte playing a bane to female education, did not countless examples of the success attending moderate application attest the fallacy of an extreme so injurious.

The frequent attendance of concerts and other musical re-unions presents a wide arena for improvement in taste, where the mellifluous warbling of the gifted cantatrice, and the new-born style of instrumental music, may be heard in full perfection.

I may here observe a prevalence of opinion, which ever gains currency, respecting the compositions of artists who visit this country as performers.

"Nobody can play Thalberg's music *but* Thalberg," is the universal echo of a concert room, where the attempt has been made (and to the unprejudiced ear

achieved) by one of our most eminent practitioners. The same remark formerly attended the performance of Herz' music; and the self-same oracles, who, while they descanted on its abuse in other hands, made it their own high road to eminence, now deem it sufficiently easy for the recreative practice of an amateur.

That the compositions of Thalberg are perfection, when emanating from the master finger and illuminated by the soul that kindled them, nobody will deny; but were they incapable of attainment by other professors, as works of art, they would be valueless, and ephemeral "as the poor player, that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more."

The works of Thalberg WILL outlive the prejudice of their contemporaries—to tempt the fingers and delight the imagination of future artists—when the mind of inspiration slumbers in the tomb, and no breath, save that of recorded fame, whispers the comparison. Upon analyzing instrumental compositions, the practical peculiarities of the author are ever prominent, but who is deterred from attempting the music of Cramer, because *he alone* could play it with the undisturbed smoothness of a polished surface, or from emulating the dexterity of Kalkbrenner, because his dazzling octaves did once so



far outshine his compeers, that against the mass who strove he was "Hyperion to a satyr."

Döhler, again, so excels in the shake, that it would be difficult to name a rival in the perfection with which he introduces it. And as it is natural that writers who play their own arrangements, should fit them for the physical peculiarities of their hand, or for that class of mechanical difficulties to which they have given the most lengthened study—hence arises the perfection of their performance.

Many ages ago, Timotheus invented the chromatic scale, and alarmed at the increased difficulties it presented, the ungracious Spartans expelled him and his invention from their city. The result of this novelty was, however, an enlargement of the lyre, which from four strings was extended to seven. In the same manner are we indebted to these modern meteors of a starry age, for the present perfection of the piano-forte, which from its former limitation of five octaves, now owns a compass of six and a half, and in some instances of seven octaves.

Either as an accompaniment to the voice or as a faithful representative of the rich effects of a full orchestra, its powers of modulation render it unequalled, while its

*negative control over the fair proportions* gives to the piano-forte a decided preference over every instrument that the sanction of custom has termed feminine.

Mendelssohn Bartholdy has attested its varied facilities of expressive articulation in his beautiful collection of songs without words, where

“ Music’s winged note  
Can waft a feeling whereso’er it float;”

and when exercised in the swelling chords of sacred harmony, the piano-forte owns no rival, but in the *monarch* of instrumental sublimity—the magnificent, the transcendant organ, of which Montgomery has beautifully said—

“ Ear, eye, and heart confess the awful spell,  
While soul and being with the magic swell,  
And as the spiral echoes upward wind  
Die off—and scarcely leave the man behind.”

# ADDENDA.

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## REVIEWS

CONSEQUENT UPON THE PERFORMANCE OF

"THE MESSIAH,"

At the Theatre Royal English Opera House,

APRIL THE 5TH, 1841.

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ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—This house was opened last night for the performance of Handel's *Messiah*, the principal vocalists being Madame Caradori Allen, Madame F. Lablache, Miss Woodyatt, and Messrs. H. Phillips, Hobbs, and Leffler. The audience was very numerous; but in spite of the merits of the principals, the oratorio went but heavily, the choruses being feeble and ineffective, in comparison with those heard at Exeter Hall. *The most interesting feature of the evening was the appearance, between the parts of the oratorio, of Miss Geary, who played on the piano Thalberg's celebrated and difficult fantasia on themes from Mosé in Egitto. She is a very young lady, and the task she had set herself was a formidable one, but she played with a great deal of power, a firmness of touch, a command of her instrument, and a facility of execution, that called forth loud applause as she retired from the stage.—Times, April 6.*

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—Handel's oratorio (the *Messiah*) was produced here last evening with Mozart's accompaniments. The performance was got up under the superintendence of Mr. Allcroft, who had engaged as principal vocalists, Mesdames Caradori Allen and F. Lablache, Miss Woodyatt, Messrs. Phillips, Leffler, and Hobbs. The curtain rose at seven, and presented a full orchestra upon the stage, led by Mr. Loder and conducted by Sir George Smart. On either side were the choruses, and in the distance a misty cathedral interior. The best parts of the performance of the oratorio were the solos, particularly those of Madame Caradori and Madame F. Lablache. The former sang

the "Rejoice greatly" with beautiful emphasis and expression, and nearly provoked an *encore*, as did also the latter lady in her singing of the recitative and aria, "Then shall the eyes" and "He shall feed his flock." Phillips was good as usual, but very *nonchalant* and inanimate; and Leffler deserves high praise for his beautiful singing of "Why do the nations." The choruses were vigorous and in earnest, but sometimes harmonized badly, and wanted the effects of an organ to keep them together; they rather improved in the second part. The orchestra was deficient in the making of the principal points. The bassoon, for instance, was very lame. The oboe which has so much to do, particularly in the Mozart accompaniments, was comparatively inaudible; and Harper's obligato to "Behold, I tell you the trumpet shall sound," was the only remarkable *morceau* of instrumental solo. *Between the parts Miss Geary performed on the piano-forte Thalberg's fantasia on Themes from Mosè in Egitto. This young lady acquitted herself with considerable taste and power, and with indications of good tuition.* The house was well attended, and Mr. Allcroft deserves credit for having done his best to produce the oratorio efficiently, but the Exeter Hall performances originate by the effort of memory, comparisons which are "not odorous."—*Morning Post*, April 6.

*The Messiah* was very admirably given at the English Opera on Monday. It was got up under the superintendence of Mr. Allcroft, who is deserving of praise for having done it so efficiently. The vocal parts were sustained by Madame Caradori Allen, Miss Woodyatt, Phillips, Hobbs, and Leffler. Sir George Smart was the conductor, and the orchestra was led by Mr. Loder. Harper was the chief feature in the instrumental department; his obligato to "Behold, I tell you the trumpet shall sound" was one of the choicest and richest performances of the evening. *Miss Geary performed on the piano-forte; she gave a fantasia of Thalberg's with great taste, and was deservedly applauded.* The whole went off extremely well, and appeared to afford gratification to a highly respectable and numerous audience.—*Age*, April 10.

The *Messiah* was on Monday evening given at the English Opera House, and by the assistance of Madame Caradori Allen, Miss Woodyatt, Mr. Hobbs, Mr. Leffler, and Mr. H. Phillips, a most delightful performance was produced. The choruses were a *little* weak, but the principals were all that could be wished. *Between the acts, Miss Geary, a young lady of great promise, and whose promise is already borne out by her performance, executed one of Thalberg's extraordinary compositions for the piano-forte, in a manner to leave us no regret, save that of the great maestro, having been, at the time he wrote it, in a humour rather to astonish than to please. Miss Geary will be a first-rate player. We promise this, and she will perform it.*—*Argus*, April 10.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.—“The Messiah” was performed here on Monday, and never did we witness so great a desecration of Handel’s immortal work. The principal singers seemed weighed down by souls of lead, and the choruses were sung with studied inaccuracy; out of tune and out of time was the order of the night. *Between the parts of the oratorio, Thalberg’s fantasia from “Moses in Egypt,” was performed on the piano-forte by Miss Geary, in so brilliant and effective a style as to carry away the entire applause of the evening.* We presume the affair was got up by some speculators for the holy week.—*Era*, April 10.

See also *Standard, Globe*, April 6; *Court Journal, Sunday Times, Conservative Journal*, &c. April 10.

## REVIEWS

CONSEQUENT UPON A

### GRAND MORNING CONCERT

GIVEN BY

MISS GEARY AND MISS ELIZABETH GEARY,

AT WILLIS’S GREAT CONCERT ROOM, KING STREET, ST. JAMES’S,  
JUNE 21st, 1841,

*Under the distinguished Patronage of*

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON.

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUGH.

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF MONTROSE.

THE RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS OF SURREY.

THE RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS CADOGAN.

THE RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS OF SANDWICH.

THE RIGHT HON. THE COUNTESS OF CAWDOR.

THE RIGHT HON. THE VISCOUNTESS PALMERSTON.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LADY PETRE.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LADY LUCY ELEANOR LOWTHER.

THE LADY WORSLEY HOLMES.

THE HON. MRS. DYCE SOMBRE.

**THE MISSES GEARY'S CONCERT.**—This concert took place yesterday morning at Willis's Rooms, which were filled on this occasion with a very numerous and fashionable audience. *The eldest of these young ladies, who is a pianiste of no inferior capacity, played a duo concertante with Mr. Blagrove, in which she by no means allowed herself to be eclipsed by that violinist. In a fantasia by Döhler—a composition of great difficulty—she displayed a brilliant execution, and a degree of energy which we have seldom seen in performers of her sex.* Miss Elizabeth Geary sang a duet with Mrs. Toulmin, and afterwards a cavatina, in both of which she evinced good taste and capabilities, which her timidity prevented from being displayed to all advantage. In the course of the concert, this young lady performed on an instrument of modern invention, termed a concertina, and obtained considerable applause, but the misfortune with these instruments is, that it is impossible to judge how much of the merit is due to them, and how much to the performer. Mr. Blagrove performed a solo by Maurer, in a brilliant and finished style, which drew forth loud applause. The elder Chatterton executed a grand fantasia on the harp, in which he exhibited all his great and varied powers, to the delight of his audience, manifested in continued plaudits. Madame Dorus Gras sang a scena by Auber and “*Idole de ma vie*,” in her best and most beautiful style, and carried off rapturous applause. The rest of the performers who lent their assistance on this occasion were Mr. F. Lablache and his lady, Mademoiselle Hillen, Mr. J. Parry, Signor Marras, Mr. J. Gear, Mr. W. Seguin, and Mr. Saynor, who obtained an ample share of applause for his performance on the flute. Between the parts, Herr Bigall sang two national songs, in the Tyrolean style, and was very much applauded. The concert was throughout a most agreeable one, and, from all appearances, productive to its fair givers.—*Times*, June 22.

**WILLIS'S ROOMS.**—The Misses Geary had a morning concert yesterday at the above rooms. The excellent connection of the young *bénéficiaires*, secured them a full audience, and to do them justice, they had provided ample attraction. Among the vocalists were Dorus Gras, Mrs. Toulmin, and Signor and Madame F. Lablache, John Parry, Mr. W. Seguin, Mr. J. Gear, &c.; and in the instrumental department, were Chatterton, Blagrove, and Saynor. Signor Cittadini conducted. The programme contained a good selection of performances, which were generally well sustained. *Miss Geary acquitted herself with much nerve and steadiness on the piano-forte*, and her sister displayed the expression of a sweet voice to considerable advantage. A lady of the name of Hillin made a *début*, the promise of which we look to see further fulfilled, before we venture to give further criticism. The concert altogether went off with *éclat*.—*Morning Post*, June 22.

**WILLIS'S ROOMS.**—The concert of Miss Geary & Miss E. Geary took place yesterday morning, at these rooms. *The former is a pianiste of considerable merit, and played on this occasion Döhler's*

*fantasia, with variations, from themes of the Anne Bolena. She also joined Mr. Blagrove in the duo concertante of de Beriot and Benedict.* Miss E. Geary has cultivated a contralto voice with care and judgment; and has also made herself mistress of that agreeable instrument the concertina. She executed on it with much steadiness and nice expression, the Tyrolienne. We were happy to hear again at this concert, Signor Marras in the "Tutto è sciolto" of Bellini, and with F. Lablache in the "Se code esaveive," from Betly. It is to be regretted that a vocalist of such accomplished art, fine voice, and rare good taste, should be so much a stranger to our musical entertainments. Several other *artistes*, both vocal and instrumental, contributed to the attractions of this concert, which passed off quite to the satisfaction of a numerous auditory.—*Morning Herald*, June 22.

The Misses Geary's concert at Willis's Rooms, on Monday morning, was attended by about six hundred persons, who appeared to be highly pleased with the talent displayed by the *bénéficiaires*. *The elder sister performed twice on the piano-forte, in a very brilliant and dashing style*; and the younger sang with great sweetness and taste. Solos, &c. were played by J. B. Chatterton on the harp, Blagrove on the violin, Miss E. Geary on the concertina, and Mr. Saynor on the flute, which elicited very great applause. Numerous vocal compositions were sung with their wonted success by Dorus Gras, Madame Lablache, Mrs. A. Toulmin, Mlle. Hillen, Miss E. Geary, Messrs. F. Lablache, W. Seguin, J. Gear, Marras, Bigall, and John Parry. Signor Cittadini presided at the piano-forte.—*Sunday Times*, June 22.

The Misses Geary's concert took place on the morning of Monday last, at Willis's Rooms. *The elder of these young ladies displayed an extraordinary degree of execution upon the piano-forte, such as we have seldom before met with.* Miss Elizabeth Geary sang with very good taste, and elicited great applause by her performance on the concertina. There were others whose talents gave general satisfaction, among whom was Madame Dorus Gras, who sang "Idole de ma vie" in her own exquisite style, creating delight among her listeners by her sweet and perfect warblings. Mlle. Hillen gave promise of becoming an acquisition to the present corps of foreign vocalists; and Herr Bigall sang a couple of national Tyrolese songs with much approbation. This very charming entertainment was attended, as it deserved to be, by a fashionable and numerous audience.—*Argus*, June 26.

The concert of the Misses Geary, which took place on Monday at Willis's Rooms, boasted a full attendance of visitors, who were fully repaid by the musical feast prepared for them. Madame Dorus Gras sang "Tourment de veuvage" and "Idole de ma vie," her best pieces. F. Lablache and Madame Lablache were also heard to much advantage. J. Parry, as usual, was loudly applauded in two of his ever popular songs. *The talent of Miss*

Geary was admirably displayed in a duo concertante for piano-forte and violin, with Mr. Blagrove; nor in a fantasia by Döhler was she less successful. Miss E. Geary sang a cavatina by Balfe, and in a duet with Mrs. Toulmin, with taste and sweetness. Blagrove performed a solo on the violin, and Mr. Balsir Chatterton a fantasia on the harp—both with the utmost grace and finish. Mr. W. Seguin, J. Gear, Signor Marras, and other vocalists also contributed their aid, and the frequent applause fully evinced the general contentment, with the varied exertions of the fair *bénéficiaires* to please their audience.—*Satirist*, June 26.

WILLIS'S ROOMS, SAINT JAMES'S.—The Misses Geary's grand morning concert, on Monday, was fully and fashionably attended. The programme was well selected, and many of our leading artistes appeared on the occasion. The well-known "*Duo Concertante*," on themes from "*La Somnambula*," was charmingly performed by Miss Geary and Mr. Blagrove; there was a unity of effect, which was the more welcome, as we too frequently observe one artiste straining to play down the other. Miss Elizabeth Geary sang "*Non v'è Donna*," with excellent expression, and was much applauded. Chatterton gave his fantasia on the harp, and Blagrove Maurer's adagio and rondo. This gentleman is our first English violinist; his style, expression, and *coups d'archet*, are equal to any of the bepraised and bepatroned foreign artistes. Dorus Gras sang with her acknowledged skill. The two *bénéficiaires* exerted themselves most successfully, and elicited the warm approbation of their friends.—*Era*, June 26.

The Misses Geary's Concert took place at Willis's Rooms, on Monday morning. Miss Geary played a fantasia, by Döhler, with considerable execution; but we liked her duo concertante with Mr. Blagrove the best. Madame Dorus Gras was in good voice, and gave "*Idole de ma vie*," and a scena by Auber, in a brilliant style. Miss Elizabeth Geary sung a cavatina, and a duet with Mrs. Toulmin, with great taste, but was evidently very timid. Blagrove's solo, by Maurer, was a finished performance, as was that of the elder Chatterton on the harp. Signor Marras, Mademoiselle Hillen, Signor Lablache and his lady, Herr Bigall, and some few more artistes, assisted at this very agreeable concert.—*Weekly Dispatch*, June 26.

The concert given by the Misses Geary, at Willis's Rooms, on Monday morning, was one of the most numerous and fashionably attended of the season, and went off with great éclat. The principal feature, was the piano-forte performance of Miss Geary; which, for rapidity, brilliancy, fulness of tone, and sustained effect, deserves unqualified eulogium. The theme and variations, from *Anna Bolena* (Döhler), was most brilliantly executed. Miss Elizabeth Geary sang with great taste and delicacy of finish: her voice is a contralto, of very agreeable quality; her performance, also, on the concertina, was of singular merit, and elicited long continued applause. Madame Dorus Gras, Signori Marras and



F. Lablache, John Parry, Blagrove, and several other artists, gave their assistance at this delightful musical reunion.—*Court Journal*, June 26.

Miss Geary and Miss Elizabeth Geary gave a concert on Monday, at Willis's Rooms, King Street, St. James's, which were filled on the occasion. *The former young lady is a pianiste of considerable merit, and played Döhler's fantasia, with variations, from themes of the Anna Bolena, and the duo concertante of De Beriot and Benedict, with Blagrove, with such grace and ease, as to draw forth the approbation of the whole company.* Miss E. Geary, who has a contralto voice, proved that it had been cultivated with great care and precision: this young lady also exhibited, for the first time in public, her talent on that agreeable instrument, the concertina, and executed on it, with much steadiness and expression, the Tyrolienne. Signor Marras (who by the bye does not appear so frequently as he should do in our musical entertainments) delighted every one with his fine voice, and was warmly applauded in the duet with F. Lablache. To say that Dorus Gras, Madame Lablache, and the other artists gave great satisfaction, is only to say what must inevitably be the case, when those persons appear. Parry was as comical as ever; many who had heard his songs only a few days before, enjoyed them the more on repetition.—*Observer*, June 26.

MISS GEARY AND MISS ELIZABETH GEARY'S CONCERT.—A numerous company honored these talented young ladies by their presence at Willis's Rooms, on Monday afternoon, including many of the fashionable world. *Miss Geary is a brilliant pianiste, who makes light of the modern difficulties set down for the instrument: her performance of Döhler's Anna Bolena fantasia was achieved without apparent effort, and won considerable applause; Miss Geary also executed the Somnambula duet with Mr. H. Blagrove very satisfactorily.* Miss E. Geary is a vocalist, possessing a sweet and flexible voice, and evidently a good style, which, when she has conquered her present timidity by frequent appearances before the public, will entitle her to rank highly in her art: this young lady also played a fantasia on the concertina very adroitly. Mr. H. Blagrove, Mr. Chatterton, and Mr. Saynor (a flautist of superior ability) performed each a solo, with meritorious applause. Mesdames Dorus Gras, F. Lablache, and A. Toulmin, Messrs. J. Gear, F. Lablache, and John Parry, sang several of their most popular pieces; Signor Marras, whom we do not recollect to have previously heard, displayed a fine tenor voice and good taste in Bellini's "Tutto è sciolto," and Herr Bigall gave us an Alpine national song, with guitar accompaniment, which was highly approved by the audience. Signor Cittadini presided; and, bating a little too much noisy display in his preludes, accomplished his onerous duty very skilfully.—*Musical World*, June 24.

See also the *Standard*, *Globe*, *Sun*, June 22; *Conservative Journal*, *Age*, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, &c. June 26.









